

## **Racquetball Association of Ireland**

### **Risk Management Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Health and safety is fundamental to every the Association and its clubs. All members are responsible for Health and Safety and should always be conscious of their responsibility.

Event management is necessary for the Association, clubs and provinces, whether it's a fundraiser, a league or a tournament, knowing how to run a safe and well-organised event is critical.

Developing volunteers experience in event management can improve and increase the scale and size of events the club is capable of hosting.

In this document will discuss both Health and Safety and Event Management in more detail.

#### **Event Management**

The Association and its clubs run events of some kind.

Most of the work for an event is in the planning.

This section will cover the key steps to delivering a successful event.

Examples of common events include:

- Open Tournament
- 1 day Tournament.
- A League
- Awards night.
- Fundraising event.
- Invitational tournament.

Regardless of the type of event the key principles are the same.

Developing a culture of effective goal setting, planning, delegation and team work will not only help run better events, it will make it easier for volunteers to do so.

#### **Planning an event**

Planning is about deciding what the event should be. To begin with you need to ask and answer the main questions:

- What is the event?
- When is the best time for it to take place?
- Where is the best location for the event?
- Who is the event for?
- Who will organise it?
- How are we going to make this event happen and how much will it cost?

By answering these questions, you can decide if it is worth the time, effort and money it takes to makes it a success.

If you have answered all these questions and still want to go ahead, then it is time to start developing your Action Plan (or project plan).

#### **Action Plan**

The event action plan is the list of tasks that need to be completed for the event to proceed and run safely and successfully. There are four simple steps:

- Identify the tasks or actions that have to be done.
- Decide when the tasks need to be completed, before, during and after the event.
- Decide who is going to undertake each task.
- Document the tasks, timelines and responsibilities in a pre-event action plan.

The main benefits of documenting an action plan are that:

- It ensures that nothing is forgotten about.
- It is more easily communicated and is no longer 'in someone's head'.
- It can be tracked in the weeks coming up to the event so that the event team can see how preparations are progressing.
- It helps to ensure that there are no overlaps with people doing the same thing.

### **Event Day/Weekend Plan**

As progress is made through the tasks in the action plan, information and decisions will be clarified and made.

These will determine how the event will be run on the day or over the weekend.

The event day plan should cover the same areas worked on as part of the Action Plan such as equipment, catering and so on.

Rather than tasks or open questions, however, the event day plan should state what will actually happen.

Schedule of matches and a schedule for personnel manning the Tournament Desk should be prepared.

### **Using & Tracking your Action Plan**

Implementing a pre-event action plan is the key to a successful event, which means it needs to be actively used and monitored throughout the planning phase.

There are a number of ways this can be achieved:

- Ensure every member of the team has the action plan/schedule.
- Check that everyone who has a task to undertake, understands the task fully.
- Meet regularly to review the plan, cross off completed tasks and identify what has to be done to finalise incomplete tasks.
- In the same meetings, look ahead at upcoming tasks, again ensuring that they are clear and understood.
- If possible, redistribute the plan once it has been updated.

### **Contingency planning**

It is always important to put some thought into contingency plans. Ask the 'What if?' questions.

- What if a court or courts at a venue are unplayable?
- What if court walls becomes wet?
- What if a court floor becomes wet/slippery?
- What if an athlete get injured?
- What if an underage athlete get injured?
- What if a volunteer can't report in on the day?

### **Event team**

Teamwork enables ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results.

Nowhere better does this apply than to the running of events.

In some cases, one or two individuals could plan, manage and deliver an event.

However, depending on the size of the event it may be a huge workload for those people, and it may not achieve the same result as what a team could.

Most events require a team of people, working together, to make it a success.

They should each have a specific job, or jobs, and should be included in the planning process as early as possible.

However, it is often better to have an 'Event Manager or Tournament Director'. Someone who will coordinate and drive the planning, lead the team and be the decision maker when necessary.

A structure of this type has many benefits:

- Shared workload.
- Reduce the dependency on any one person.
- Defined roles and responsibilities.
- Better communication – making it clear who can be contacted on a particular issue.
- A clearly identified management structure.
- No single point of failure – if any member of the team needs to leave there are others who can continue their work.

Whatever structure you use the most important thing is that each member of the team knows what their job is and that the team work well together.

### **Venue/Venues**

Planning your venue is a critical part of the planning process. The first step in this process is choosing the right venue. Most events will take place at the GAA centres, Community Centres or Schools and there are many factors to consider when making this decision, including:

- Courts available at each venue
- Cost of the venue.
- Parking facilities.
- Ease of access for athletes travelling long distances.
- Catering Facilities.
- Showering Facilities
- Toilet facilities.
- Disability access.

Once you have decided on the locations for the event, it's time to start thinking about where exactly everything will happen.

- Ensure in advance that you have identified the best location for each component of the event.
- Make a plan as to which courts/particular divisions are assigned to.
- Establish a start time and a finish time for each day.
- Schedule matches making allowances for athletes who have to travel long distances.
- Men's Open and Women's Open Divisions should be held at the main venue.
- In the interest of safety, all women's and junior matches should be held at the main venue.
- Plan the flow of people around the venue.

### **Running the event**

The most hectic part of the whole event process is the day itself.

However, the more time and effort that is put into the planning and preparation the more likely things will run smoothly on the day.

Having a clear plan for what will be taking place is essential.

Regardless of the type or size of event you should have a running order/match schedule that lists everything that will be taking place and where.

Everyone involved on the day should have a copy.

The following are examples of the spaces you should identify on your venue

1. Main entry & exit points.
2. Courts to be used
3. Spectator viewing area.

4. Changing areas
5. Toilets (players, public, disabled).
6. Tournament Desk
7. Medical/First Aid
8. Drawsheet Display Area
9. PA announcement area
10. Eating areas
11. Storage area for gear bags.
12. Parking (teams, public, guests, disabled, emergency).
13. Waste disposal points

Regardless of the amount of preparation work there will always be tasks to be done on the day before the start of the event.

These may include:

- Checking courts/changing rooms/showers/viewing areas
- Putting up signage.
- Setting up the check in/tournament desk.
- Posting up Drawsheets
- Designating parking spaces.
- Risk assessment/safety checks
- Arranging referees for the first matches

Make sure the event team get there early enough to get these completed in plenty of time. It makes things much more difficult if participants or spectators arrive while you are still trying to set up.

Another essential task before the event starts is the volunteer briefing.

Success is very much dependent on every individual understanding what their role is on the day and have the knowledge to do it. Also, if anyone has an issue, they need to know who to contact to get it resolved.

When the event begins it is important that it runs smoothly and to times as best as possible. This can be helped by

- Collecting entry fees at check-in
- Informing athletes in advance which court they have been allocated for their match.
- Arranging losers to referees next matches before showering.
- Being strict on warm up times.

### **Court Safety**

Tournament Directors before and during play should ensure that courts are always in a safe condition for athletes to play in.

They should ensure the court floors are clean and free of dust. Tournament directors should inform referees that floors that become wet due to players diving or sweating should be dried at the next break in play.

A towel or dry mop should be available at each court.

Under no circumstances should a court that become wet from condensation be used.

If court walls and/or floor becomes wet due to condensation it must be closed down and not used again until its safe to do so.

### **Finals & Presentation**

Open Finals (Men's and Women's) are the highlights of an Open Tournament or National Championships.

These matches should be played at the best time to get exposure for the sport both by online streaming and locally.

Presentations of awards/medals should take place immediately after the event.

Athletes receiving awards/medals should be asked to wear sports gear rather than street clothes for the presentations.

### **Post Event**

A volunteer debriefing should also take place at the end of the event.

It should:

- Take place once the participants have left, and the clear up is completed.
- Discuss what went well.
- Discuss what could have gone better and needs improvement for next time.
- Include recognition for and thanks to the team.
- Written report to the EXCO.

### **Health & Safety**

Note: The information covered in this section is only an overview of Safety, Health and Welfare, and is not designed to be a comprehensive guide to the Association's safety responsibility or its duties at law.

Clubs will require professional advice appropriate to the legal formation of the club, and the scale, scope and complexity of their activities.

Considerations include:

- Clubs with employees have a legal obligation under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and related legislation, and should ensure that they have the suitable and necessary Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare expertise in order for them to discharge their duties sufficiently.
- Some clubs are tenants in the facility / grounds and may be required to adhere to terms and conditions of the tenant agreement, including stipulated Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements.
- Insurance policies generally include some condition(s) regarding the Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements and documentation.

### **RAI/Club's Responsibilities**

As well as Statutory responsibilities, all clubs must address their individual arrangements in regards to safety, health and welfare, and ensure they are sufficient to create and maintain a safe environment within the club for all involved, whether an employee, a volunteer, a member and/or a visitor, and for all activities.

One method of doing so is to establish a Safety Statement which, as a minimum, should define roles and arrangements for establishing and maintaining safety, health and welfare within the club.

Everyone involved in the club has a part to play in ensuring a safe environment in the club, for the benefit of the club.

There are specific duties in regards to the safety, health and welfare, including duties for management level through to those involved with activities on the ground, and these should be documented in the Safety Statement, however, it is important that a safe culture is established / maintained and delegated from the Board /Management to all involved.

This shared responsibility is a culture that should be promoted, that everyone, working together, must ensure the safe day to day running of the club. In order to assist with this, it may be beneficial to assign a committee to update and maintain the club's safety arrangements in line with the Safety Statement and assign a Safety Coordinator to encourage the club to keep health and safety on the Agenda.

A key piece of legislation in regards to health and safety in the workplace is the Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005, and one purpose of this legislation is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees, contractors and visitors in the workplaces.

Whilst this legislation is aimed at workplaces it establishes the principles required in relation to health, safety and welfare which will assist all clubs in managing risk and minimising liability. The RAI and clubs have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of everyone involved.

### **Safety Statement**

A Safety Statement may include:

- Safety Policy – an outline of intentions in regards to safety, health and welfare within the club.
- Duties and responsibilities – identifies the specific duties for some individuals.
- Safety arrangements – the policies and procedures in regards to safety, health and welfare.
- These will include normal operations and in times of an emergency.
- Risk assessment – the identification of applicable hazards and control measures required to eliminate /minimise the risks.

The risk assessment then forms part of the Safety Statement and should be reviewed regularly and updated as required.

### **Safety Arrangements**

In general, the safety arrangements are dependent on the clubs size and activities however there are generic ones that are applicable to all clubs and include, but are not limited to:

### **Safety Statement**

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- Safety Policy – an outline of the club's intentions in regards to safety, health and welfare within the club.
- Duties and responsibilities – identifies the specific duties for some individuals.
- Safety arrangements – the policies and procedures of the club in regards to safety, health and welfare.
- These will include normal operations and in times of an emergency.
- Risk assessment – the identification of applicable hazards and control measures required to eliminate /minimise the risks.

### **Risk Assessment**

There are some safety arrangements which the club has a statutory obligation to implement, for example first aid and accident reporting etc. In addition to these each club must identify what hazards are applicable to their respective club activities and grounds and determine the necessary controls to eliminate / minimise the risk.

In order to do this a comprehensive risk assessment must be carried out by a competent person. The risk assessment should;

- Identify the hazards.
- Assess the applicable risk.
- Determine the necessary control measure(s) to eliminate or at least minimise the risk.

The risk assessment then forms part of the Safety Statement and should be reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Other necessary arrangements will be identified through the risk assessment process.

Once determined these arrangements should be developed in consultations with those applicable and then communicated to all relevant.

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|---------------------------|---------------|
| ○ Coaching Policy         | ○ Fire Safety |
| ○ Accidents and Incidents | ○ Electricity |

- Equipment
- Emergency procedures
- Underage Players
- Visitors to the Club
- First Aid
- Maintenance
- Players Welfare

### **Insurance**

To safeguard all, the clubs must be properly insured. The insurance policy / cover required will depend on the club's size, the range of activities that take place and the value of insured property. Different types of policies include but are not limited to:

- Public Liability
- Employers Liability (if applicable)

Therefore, whatever the size or type of club it is strongly recommended that the club seek professional advice from an insurance company or broker.

The RAI has Public Liability Insurance which covers all National & Provincial Championships and Open & Tournaments sanctioned by the Association.

### **Document Signed**

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Tournament Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_  
President

Dated 4th June 2021

Document Reviewed\* [date]

\*This document is to be reviewed every three years or whenever necessary.

### **Coaching Policy - RAI**

#### **Accidents & Incidents/Injuries to athletes**

**Fire Safety** - Venue responsibility but should be known by event organiser.

**Electricity** - Venue responsibility but should be known by event organiser.

**Equipment** - Venue responsibility but should be known by event organiser.

**Emergency procedures** - Venue responsibility but should be known by event organiser

**Underage Players** - See Child Safety Statement

**Visitors to the Club** - Venue responsibility but should be known by event organiser.

**First Aid** - Event Organiser responsibility & Venue responsibility

**Maintenance** - Venue responsibility but should be known by event organiser.

**Players Welfare** - RAI